

I. Listing of Claims

1. (Currently Amended) A medical instrument comprising:
 - a housing member having a passage through which a catheter including an outer profile is received;
 - a cap having a recess formed therein and in fluid communication with the passage, the recess being defined by ~~recess dimensions~~ a first height dimension and a first width dimension, both dimensions across the center of the recess; and
 - a valve body to be received in the recess and ~~mounted to~~ abut the housing member ~~in the passage~~, the valve body having first and second faces and a peripheral edge separating the faces, the peripheral edge being non-circular when the valve body is unstressed, the valve body further having a first slit formed on one of the faces and a second slit formed on the other face, each slit formed through a portion of the valve body and intersecting with the other slit within the valve body,
 - the valve body conforming to the outer profile of the catheter when the catheter is disposed through the first and second slits to maintain a fluid tight seal between the valve body and the catheter,
 - the valve body having a second height dimension and a second width dimension, both dimensions across the center of the valve body ~~and a width dimension across the center of the valve body~~, the second width dimension being less than the second height dimension when the valve body is unstressed, ~~the height and width dimensions being unequal to the recess dimensions~~, the second height dimension being greater than the first height dimension of the recess and the second width dimension being less than the first width dimension of the recess, the second height and the second width dimensions defining a plane parallel to the first and second faces and perpendicular to the slits, the valve body configured to be compressed only along the entire peripheral edge parallel to the second height dimension when the valve body is received by the recess, defining a generally circular shape.
2. (Original) The instrument of claim 1 wherein the first and second slits are oriented at an angle with respect to each other.

3. (Original) The instrument of claim 1 wherein the first and second slits are perpendicular to each other.
4. (Cancelled)
5. (Cancelled)
6. (Cancelled)
7. (Previously Presented) The instrument of claim 27 wherein the recess is a circular recess with a circular cross section.
8. (Cancelled)
9. (Previously Presented) The instrument of claim 7 wherein the peripheral edge has an oval shape when the valve body is unstressed before being received in the recess.
10. (Cancelled)
11. (Previously Presented) The instrument of claim 27 wherein the first and second slits are oriented at an angle with respect to each other.
12. (Previously Presented) The instrument of claim 27 wherein the first and second slits are perpendicular to each other.
13. (Cancelled)
14. (Cancelled)
15. (Cancelled)

16. (Previously Presented) The instrument of claim 1 wherein the recess is a circular recess with a circular cross section.

17. (Cancelled)

18. (Previously Presented) The instrument of claim 16 wherein the peripheral edge has an oval shape when the valve body is unstressed before being received in the recess.

19. (Currently Amended) A medical instrument comprising:
a housing member having a passage through which a catheter including an outer profile is received;

a cap having a recess formed therein and in fluid communication with the passage, the recess being defined by ~~recess dimensions~~ a first height dimension and a first width dimension, both dimensions across the center of the recess; and

a valve body to be received in the recess and ~~mounted to~~ abut the housing member ~~in the passage~~, the valve body having first and second faces and a peripheral edge separating the faces, the peripheral edge being non-circular when the valve body is unstressed, the valve body further having a slit defining a slit plane extending from the first face and partly through the valve body and an opening extending from the second face and partly through the valve body, the slit plane and the opening intersecting within the valve body, the opening provided with an internal ring positioned within the valve body between the second face and the intersection between the slit plane and the opening,

the valve body conforming to the outer profile of the catheter when the catheter is disposed through the slit plane and the internal ring to maintain a fluid tight seal between the valve body and the catheter,

the valve body having a second height dimension and a second width dimension, both dimensions across the center of the valve body ~~and a width dimension across the center of the valve body~~, the second width dimension being less than the second height dimension when the valve body is unstressed, ~~the height and width dimensions being unequal to the recess dimensions, the second height dimension being greater than the first height dimension of the recess and the second~~

width dimension being less than the first width dimension of the recess, the second height and the second width dimensions defining a plane parallel to the first and second faces and perpendicular to the slit, the valve body configured to be compressed only along the peripheral edge parallel to the second height dimension when the valve body is received by the recess, defining a generally circular shape.

20. (Previously Presented) The instrument of claim 19 wherein the cap has a recess with a height dimension that is less than the height dimension of the valve body.

21. (Cancelled)

22. (Original) The instrument of claim 20 wherein the recess is a circular recess with a circular cross section.

23. (Cancelled)

24. (Cancelled)

25. (Previously Presented) The instrument of claim 19 wherein the valve body includes an external raised ring on the second planar face, the external raised ring surrounding the opening.

26. (Cancelled)

27. (Currently Amended) A medical instrument comprising:

a housing member having a passage through which a catheter including an outer profile is received;

a cap having a recess formed therein and in fluid communication with the passage, the recess having a first height dimension across the recess; and

a valve body to be received in the recess and ~~mounted to~~ abut the housing member ~~in the passage~~, the valve body having first and second faces and a peripheral edge separating the faces, the peripheral edge being non-circular when

the valve body is unstressed, the valve body further having a first slit formed on one of the faces and a second slit formed on the other face, each slit formed through a portion of the valve body and intersecting with the other slit within the valve body,

the valve body conforming to the outer profile of the catheter when the catheter is disposed through the first and second slits to maintain a fluid tight seal between the valve body and the catheter,

the valve body having an oblong shape such that the peripheral edge includes a pair of parallel planar surfaces perpendicular to at least one of the slits, the oblong shape defined by a second height dimension across the center of the valve body and a width dimension across the center of the valve body, the width dimension being less than the second height dimension and the second height dimension being greater than the first height dimension of the recess when the valve body is unstressed, the second height dimension and the width dimension defining a plane parallel to the first and second faces and perpendicular to the slits, ~~the second height dimension being greater than the first height dimension,~~ wherein the valve body is configured to be compressed only along the entire peripheral edge parallel to the second height dimension and wherein the planar surfaces allow the valve body to expand in the width dimension without interacting with the recess when the valve body is received by the recess, producing a closing force on the entire length of one of the slits after removal of the catheter to prevent leakage, defining a generally circular shape.